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Santa Paws
Snowflake Meadows owner Kristyn Begbie takes a moment to smile with Santa during the annual Snowflake Meadows holiday fundraiser. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Commemorative crosswalk makes moves

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

For the past ten years, Richard Schell has been a volunteer with the Mabel D. Brannigan Royal Canadian Legion Branch 636 of Minden. He's passionate about supporting the community and all it has to offer.

But he never expected the outpour of support for the commemorative sidewalk he brought to council.

On Aug. 14, Schell contacted M.P. Jamie Schmale with the idea of creating a commemorative crosswalk in Minden.

Soon after, Schell received an encouraging reply from Schmale, with information on the other commemorative crosswalks that have been created in Ontario in cities like Petawawa and St. Catherines.

see CROSSWALK page 14

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Local dog charities seek help

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Nearly every month, a local dog is abandoned, surrendered, or in need of shelter in the county.

Currently, the only services for Minden Hills are Killara Station and Snowflake Meadows. Both of these charities say that their services are getting used more and more each year. In order to continue to provide care and rehousing services for dogs in Haliburton County, they need to see support from Minden Hills.

On Thursday, Oct. 30, Susan Peel of Paws at Killara Station presented her proposed community plan for managing dogs in Minden Hills.

"There is a problem," said Peel.

Peel proposed a monthly contribution of $300 from Minden Hills, whether or not a dog is taken into their care.

Peel says that she wants the fee from the municipality to show their support towards their program for reuniting dogs with homes.

"Having two places and no support from the council is really difficult," said Peel. "I've been doing it since 2013 for free. It's a handful and I feel taken advantage of."

As the population of Minden is growing, so too does the number of lost, neglected, and surrendered dogs.

The proposal states that Paws at Killara Station will act as the official pound intake. They will take care of checking the dog's microchips and utilize social media to reunite dogs with their owners. Snowflake Meadows will provide veterinary care, spay or neuter the dogs, and provide adoption services for dogs needing a new home.

Insurance is carried by both of the partnering operations and they will operate a Lost and Found Dog Portal which can be accessed by the public.

Peel sought council to approve their service agreements, inform the community on how to handle lost dogs, and to provide by-law support when needed.

Deputy Mayor Lisa Schell asked Peel when the last time she brought the issue to council, which Peel replied saying that it was in 2015. After ten years, even the council noted that the issue with dogs has been increasing.

> *"I've been doing it since 2013 for free. It's a handful and I feel taken advantage of.*
>
> — Susan Peel, Paws at Killara Station

"I think it is a great idea," said Councillor Ivan Ingram. "I think we may need to reintroduce dog tags to better track this."

Peel said that may be a good idea, but the price of tags should be increased to pay for all the costs involved.

Mayor Bob Carter says that council has read the proposal and understands the need, but they need to speak with staff and determine the best method going forward.

"I think that we [will] receive your report and we can get a process started here," said Carter.

"This has to be a county issue at some point," said Councillor Pam Sayne. "Dogs don't know boundaries."

"There needs to be a bylaw," said Peel.

Peel says that a bylaw would help collect fees to pay for the charitable services in helping dogs.

Carter says that policing bylaw is challenging in a small community like Minden. After receiving the report, he says that they will get a process started. The process will then come to council and be debated.

Christmas trees in good shape this year despite drought

ADAM FRISK

Journalist

Those looking to get a fresh Christmas tree this year will have plenty of stock to choose from despite the brutally hot and dry summer.

The trees that are about to be harvested this year are "plentiful" and "beautiful," ensuring a good supply for consumers even after drought conditions scorched parts of Ontario.

"The trees that are harvested this year, we're excited about them," said Shirley Brennan, executive director of the Christmas Tree Farmers of Ontario. "We've got lots of them and they look beautiful. So, we're ready to go."

The larger, ready-to-harvest trees are in excellent condition; however, the summer dry spell did raise concerns about future stock, particularly the youngest trees, Brennan explained.

"Our concern is our seedlings. Some of our members lost their seedlings, or some of their seedlings," she said.

The industry expert explained that a typical annual loss of seedlings can range from about 10 to 15 per cent. But the drought exacerbated the issue in areas without irrigation.

"And so, because of the drought, some places that don't have an irrigation system, for instance, spent more time watering them and really paying attention," Brennan said. "And when I say watering them, they are literally taking a bucket and a cup, going from tree to tree.

The bucket-and-cup method was to ensure targeted watering without scorching any needles.

Dan Vanderzwet, owner and operator of Potash Creek Farms in Omemee, Ont., said in a recent telephone interview, that the summer weather essentially wiped out his seedlings this season.

"It was kind of devastating, to be honest," he said. "We planted several thousand new, you know, baby seedling trees, and we pretty much lost our entire crop that we planted this year.

"It was a pretty tough year," the farmer, who has been growing trees for nearly 20 years, said.

The dry weather also required older trees, those in the three-to-four-year range, to be watered more frequently, which could impact the growth cycle.

"It does delay the trees," Brennan said. "It may mean instead of 10 years, it's 12 years for that tree or that area of trees. So, that certainly impacts our future plans."

But the good news for those looking to get into the Christmas spirit, there's no shortage of trees to choose from this year. Shoppers across much of Ontario should have no difficulty picking out the perfect tree, including at Potash Creek Farms, for their home or cottage.

> *"[The drought] has no bearing on Christmas tree availability for this season*
>
> — Dan Vanderzwet, Potash Creek Farms

"[The drought] has no bearing on Christmas tree availability for this season," Vanderzwet emphasized

The farmer echoed Brennan's comments, noting that the mature trees look well and did not suffer in quality or colour thanks to late summer rainfall.

However, Brennan had some sage advice for those looking to get their hands on a prized Fraser fir. Because every farm has a unique inventory, certain popular species may sell out quickly. The executive director is encouraging consumers to be flexible with their choice of tree.

"If you get to a farm or a place and the species you normally buy is out, talk to the farmer," she said. "Find out what's an equivalent species for replacing that tree that you typically would always buy."

Brennan noted that the recent rain in September and October across most of the province was "great for our crops," offering a much-needed boost before the main harvest season begins.

If you're looking to "pick your own" tree this year, Potash Creek Farms in Kawartha Lakes opens to the public on November 29, and will be open on weekends leading up to Christmas or while supplies last.

Christmas Toy & Food Drive 2025

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As the Christmas season commences, The Haliburton County Home Builders Association would like to encourage you to include its Christmas Challenge in your plans. Large or small, each gift will help fill the Christmas hampers distributed by the Food Banks in Haliburton County. If you aren't sure what to collect simply gather local gift certificates.

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Peer support comes full circle

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Mental health support and awareness around substance use is something everyone should have access to. And now, the community in Haliburton County will have a space to go when they're seeking that care.

"This is a judgement free space," said David Barkley, the project lead for Coming Full Circle (CFC). "It's a safe space to come in from the cold, have a cup of coffee, and chat if you want to."

On Tuesday, Nov. 4, CFC officially opened their doors to the public. Located at unit 7A, 83 Maple Avenue, the space offers peer support groups, one-on-one connections, workshops on wellness and recovery, safe drop-in spaces, Naloxone access and training, and connections to health, housing, and employment services. "This is entirely a peer-driven program," said Barkley. "It's very person-centred."

The vision behind peer support is "people helping people." Barkley noted that staff are not doctors and nurses, rather, they are a group of specialists with lived experience in substance use, mental health, and recovery. "It takes a very special person to be able to share their experiences," said Marg Cox, the executive director of Point in Time, the organization leading CFC. "To make people feel not alone, to be a part of the community."

Cox noted that early support came from the United Way, with funding for the program now coming from Health Canada's Substance Use and Addictions Program.

The funding allows for all the programs to be offered entirely free to anyone in need, and everyone is welcome to use the services. Barkley noted that many other organizations in the county offer support to community members, and while step one was to open the new CFC space with peer support, step two is to connect with other organizations to maximize their reach and offerings. "We want to help break down those barriers," he said. "Peer support is close to my heart. I know how valuable it is."

The official opening of Coming Full Circle last week, held at their new venue on Maple Street in Haliburton. The peer support organization aims to provide a safe space for anyone in need. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

The Haliburton location of Coming Full Circle is open three days a week, with a satellite office at the Minden Community Food Centre open one day a week. Barkley intends to partner in neighbouring communities to have additional satellite services coming soon.

"We know there can be a lot of barriers in getting support," said Barkley, noting the challenges that exist both internally, and systematically. "Lived experience is lived expertise. It's valuable, and we're ready to show you."

Movie magic

The annual Haliburton International Film Festival took place over the weekend, with the event opening with two screenings of Oscar-winning director Guillermo del Toro's adaptation of Mary Shelley's classic tale of Victor Frankenstein at Highlands Cinemas in Kinmount on Friday. With the film having local ties, the event was sold out in advance. Additional films were shown at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion.

Below, moviegoers begin to arrive at Highlands Cinemas for the opening of HIFF. /ADAM FRISK staff

Protect others this flu season

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

It is time to roll your sleeves up.

Now that snow is already falling, the season of respiratory illnesses is fast approaching.

The flu and COVID-19 vaccinations are the perfect tools to defend yourself against getting sick this holiday season.

Influenza can be deadly to those with compromised immune systems, says Marianne Rock, Vaccine Preventable Diseases Manager for Lakelands Public Health.

When you get vaccinated for the flu, you are not only protecting yourself, but helping protect others from getting sick, especially those who cannot receive vaccinations due to possible factors like immunocompromization, Guillain-Barré Syndrome, and allergies.

Getting vaccinated is both preventative and a selfless act for others through herd immunity. Higher vaccination rates protect those who must go without.

Rock says that health experts are able to learn from illness trends of Australia winters in order to prepare vaccines for Canadians.

This year, the flu shot will protect people from three strains of the influenza virus, down from last year's four. With influenza B cases low this past respiratory season in Australia, health officials have chosen to reduce the number of strains people are vaccinated against.

This year, the COVID-19 vaccinations that are available include Moderna's Spikevax and Pfizer BioNTech's Comirnaty. Both vaccines are effective. One difference is that Spikevax can be given to people at the age of six months, whereas Comirnaty has to be given to those over the age of five.

The latest COVID-19 strain that is on the rise is LP8.1, a descendant of Omnicron. The World Health Organization is monitoring strains and says that LP.8.1 is currently a low risk on the global level, meaning that it does not pose a large risk to global health systems.

Long COVID is still a risk for those that get infected with COVID-19. Long COVID is evident by persisting symptoms, even after recovering from COVID-19. Long COVID sufferers feel increased exhaustion, pain, and brain fog for weeks to years. It is currently not known how long Long COVID symptoms can persist.

"Since the pandemic, there seems to be a little bit of an increase in vaccine hesitancy," said Rock.

During the pandemic, several professions were mandated to receive COVID-19 vaccinations. Rock says that some people continue to challenge the government's decision. There seems to be persisting resentment to the vaccine mandates.

Now with social media, anti-vaccination content is only a click away. This prevalence of misinformation and disinformation online continues to post a challenge to public health officials throughout Ontario.

"We just want people to know the correct information," said Rock.

All information regarding vaccines should be evidence-based and provided from a reputable health care professional.

Internally, at Lakelands Public Health, there have been many discussions on how to assist people with phobia of needles and those with special needs with vaccinations, says Rock. While they are still brainstorming the issue, some tactics include letting people visit the pharmacy several times before getting any needle, meeting the pharmacist one-on-one before the pharmacy gets busy, and discussing with your healthcare provider what caused this fear in the first place.

Having open communications with the vaccine provider is highly recommended.

Rock says that everyone that has questions or concerns regarding vaccines should speak to their healthcare provider. If you would like information on vaccines, Lakelands Health provides that information for free online through their website lakelandsph.ca

"If you are sick, stay home," said Rock. Other important tools in your illness prevention tool belt include washing your hands frequently, covering your coughs, wearing a mask in public when necessary, and reducing the amount you touch your face.

If you would like to get your flu and COVID-19 vaccinations, speak to your healthcare provider. Vaccinations are also available through your local pharmacy.

Pharmacies across Haliburton County that offer vaccinations include:

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A Tale of Two Tail Gunners

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

From left, Pat Casey and Barry Hart pose in front of the Rear Gunner position of a Lancaster Bomber. /Submitted

Every year, we stray further from the day World War Two ended.

This year will mark the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War

In Canada, the remaining WWII veterans are over the age of 95 on average.

Soon, there will be no WWII veterans left at all.

It is our duty as Canadians to remember those who fight to sacrifice everything to protect Canada as we know it today.

For local residents Barry Hart and Pat Casey, they are sharing their promise of remembrance to the next generation.

Longtime friends, Hart and Casey learned that they both had relatives who were Lancaster bomber tail gunners. Hart's father, Bill Hart fought with the Royal Air Force. Casey's grandfather Earle fought with the Royal Canadian Air Force.

The rumour during WWII was that the average lifespan for a bomber crew member was around 24 to 48 hours.

Hart flew with the RAF on an Avro Lancaster Mk III. Hart's friend, Gerald Ralph flipped a coin with him to decide which gun each man would be mounted on. With the casualty rate of the rear gunner being the highest, Ralph chose the seat which was more likely for him to survive.

The Lancaster Mk III was a night bomber. Crew members would calculate distances using equipment like sextants and guide the plane by light from the ground.

While Hart was returning from a raid on Chemnitz and flying over Bellingdon, two miles northwest of Chesham, a hung up target indicator exploded within the bomb bay. This explosion instantly killed three crew members and caused the plane to crash.

Using his parachute and exiting the plane in an instant, Hart was the only crew member to survive the incident. Three Royal Air Force and three Australian Air Force members perished in the crash.

For Barry Hart and his wife Heather's wedding anniversary, the couple planned for a family reunion and visit to his father's crash site. When visiting the site, Hart put up a plaque commemorating his father. Another plaque was also placed near the grave of Ralph.

While in England, Hart also visited Bletchley Park and the National Museum of Computing. There, he saw how the enigma machines were created.

Pat Casey's grandfather, Earle Casey, was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Casey fought in WWII as a flight sergeant after enlisting at the age of 17 with his mother's approval.

Like Hunt, Casey was cramped and the most vulnerable crew member positioned at the back of the bomber.

Casey's first 11 missions went without a hitch.

While flying over Heligoland in the North Sea, Casey's plane was shot down. Surviving in a dinghy with a broken shoulder, leg, and tip of his spine, the crew shared ration and emergency kits over 12 days, reading verses from a Bible Casey's mother had given him.

With powdered rations, the crew eventually had to resort to using their own urine to survive.

Spotted by a German in a row boat, the crew were too exhausted to run away. Casey became a POW for a brief time before the war ended.

During the ordeal, Casey's mother received a telegram notifying her that her son was missing. The telegram remains in the possession of the family to this day.

With both physical and mental scars, fighting in WWII changed Casey for the rest of his life.

That is why the local residents decided to present "Pat Casey and Barry Hart: A Tale of Two Tail Gunners" this Remembrance Day.

Hart says that when he was a kid, he would have the day off of school on Remembrance Day. While he would be playing hockey, his mother would call him in at 11 a.m. for a moment of silence.

"The government changed the rules in Ontario that kids must go to school on Remembrance Day and have a suitable Remembrance Day service," said Hart.

Around 70 to 80 million deaths were because of WWII with only 25 million of those being military service personnel.

"If the allies had lost, I think it would be a far different world today than what it is," said Hart.

After talking to Tammy Rea of Those Other Movies, she agreed to collaborate with Hart and Casey to play the film *The Great Escaper* to go alongside their presentation.

The film and presentation occurred on Monday, Nov. 10 at the Haliburton Legion.

On Tuesday, Hart and Casey performed their presentation twice to high school students at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School.

Hart hopes that their presentation will inspire an interest in history and pass on remembrance to our younger generations.

Currently, there is a push for more representation of veterans related to Haliburton County. If you know of someone that should be represented, Hart asks you to contact your local council member.

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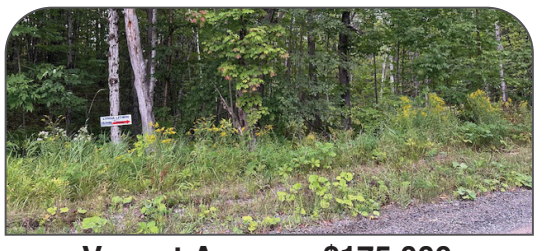

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CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER AWARD 2018

Published by **White Pine Media Corp**

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Print Subscriptions 1 yr/ $51 (taxes included). Published weekly by White Pine Media
To Subscribe to the Print or Digital edition, email subscriptions@haliburtonpress.com or call 705-457-1037.

To remember

LEST WE forget. A phrase we share around Remembrance Day. Thinking of our past chapters, looking forward with hope.

The act of marching to war in any capacity is something beyond my wildest thoughts. Because of those who fought before us, luckily, I cannot even picture the process.

Watching my kids walk away, not knowing what their future will hold, is something that makes me physically ill. I have trouble saying goodbye to my husband when he leaves for a weekend work conference, let alone a war commitment.

I wonder if the ones who fought in war realized the impact they would have on the future. That their choices, their efforts, prevented the generations beyond them to live in relative stability. Did they make their choices for us, or because it was just the thing to do at that moment? Were their experiences based on their past, their present, or their future?

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

We will likely never know. As context ripples and sheds the stories of the past, we move into a new era, and with it, a new understanding of the wars before us.

As we sit in this time of post-World Wars, we reflect on not forgetting. We commit to those stories, facing forward with a belief that the same mistakes will not be tripped over once again.

But we have done worse, since those wars. We would be remiss in not acknowledging the tirade of bullying taking place in the United States; their feral leader spitting and clawing in spaces of power. An effort made to solidify his place on a world stage, but only casting a tainted light onto their presence; a whispered reminder of who they once were.

Those men and women who marched off before us did not do that with this form of leadership in mind. I believe most would never be able to fathom the atrocities that spew from his mouth.

I will never know for sure, but I hope, in my heart of hearts, they chose their sacrifices for peace, for unity, for pride, for stability. They did it because they believed it was the right thing to do, to put others above themselves, to fall in the name of tomorrow.

Now I do not believe war solves our problems. I do not think it to be a be all and end all solution. I think war is a step taken when action is taken before grace, when guns are chosen over words. A last resort, an admission of uncertainty.

But that is not at the fault of those who chose to fight; a different era, when communications were limited and propagandistic musings were a primary news source.

It wasn't the everyday people who were engaged in those conversations. As always, it was people bigger than us in presence but not in stature, who sit at tables and make decisions on our behalf, their fingers staying clean of dirt.

Lest we forget.

But we seem to have forgotten. That disagreements lead to death, that grudges end in grief. Mistakes were made, choices were solidified, priorities were shown.

And as a result, the bloodlines of our community changed. Men and women from small towns walked away from their mothers, and were never seen again.

So lest we forget. Our past is dark, our present still shadowed. Is there a light for the future? One can only hope.

Because when we forget the past, nothing is bright.

Dash it all

"IT IS difficult indeed – it is distressing. – One does not know what to think." – Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, Chapter XVIII

In previous articles I've talked about spotting AI generated images and videos, but I haven't talked much about spotting AI generated text. This is because, by and large, there isn't any sure-fire way of doing this well or reliably. However, that doesn't stop people from trying to find some way to easily discern human writing from machine writing – whether it's correct or not.

Take the em dash. At some point this year – I'm not sure when – people began arguing that the em dash was a no-fail way of figuring out if something was written by ChatGPT or the like. But what is an em dash?

Humans & **Technology**

Erin Kernohan-Berning

The em dash is a dash that is as wide as a capital letter is high. The em as a unit in typography goes back to physical typesetting, where metal spacers called quads were used to create spaces between words. An em quad was as wide as the height of the typeface, and an en – which is where the name for the slightly smaller but similarly used en dash comes from (and the one that I use mostly) – was as wide as half the height of the typeface.

Em dashes are a versatile, much loved, and oft used – sometimes excessively used – piece of punctuation in writing. They can be used like a semicolon to create a pause, or like parentheses to create an aside, or like an ellipsis to make a sentence end prematurely – but the em dash also has a somewhat different effect than any of these. It's kind of punchier and less subtle. Where my eyes might kind of drift by a semi colon, they take notice of an em dash.

Jane Austen was particularly fond of the em dash. If you go to Project Gutenberg, open up a copy of *Pride and Prejudice,* and search for '—› you'll find more than 600 of them throughout the three volumes of that work. Since Jane Austen's works were published mostly between 1796 and 1817 (with the exception of some posthumous publication), we can be sure that her use of em dashes had nothing to do with ChatGPT.

But are em dashes really over-represented in AI generated text? At this point, aside from some forum posts and internet opining, this seems to be just anecdotal. The idea that em dashes are LLM favoured punctuation or the six fingered hand of synthetic text could be a product of confirmation bias – people are suddenly aware of em dashes because they saw a handful in some ChatGPT output and are now seeing them everywhere.

Nevertheless, in the absence of any reliable way of spotting AI generated text, calling out the use of em dashes has turned into internet shorthand for "I don't believe this is real" – and writers who have been using em dashes all this time bear the brunt of those false accusations.

Unfortunately, there's no easy "gotcha!" when it comes to synthetic text. AI detection software has been shown to be inconsistent and biased against people who are neurodivergent and those for whom English isn't their first language. Common words, punctuation marks, and bulleted lists (another emerging "tell") aren't particularly useful either – they are merely features of language that we use, and that LLMs have been trained to parrot back to us.

For trying to spot AI generated text, GetCyberSafe.ca advises looking for a dry tone and emotionless formal writing (though, a lot of institutional writing has those features), and repetition of words (again, also a human trait). Fact checking can also help – AI models, even ones designed to search the internet, are still heavily influenced by their training data. Older training data means newer facts may be absent from their results. Other clues that something is AI generated are if the AI prompt or preamble are mistakenly left in the body of text, misattributed or made-up references, or passages with odd word orders.

When humans see written language, we generally have the understanding that there's another human behind it. Now that we can't be sure of that, we want there to be a way to know if there is really a human there. Generative AI has altered a fundamental assumption of online interactions – that there is someone—anyone—behind the words we see on the screen. And while that's certainly a valid reason to take a closer look at what we are reading online, don't let the search for machines blind you to the humans that are still out there – even if they are using em dashes.

points of view

You look familiar ...

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

THE OTHER evening, I noticed a Barred owl perched on a low branch of a tree on our front lawn. So, I walked up to it and took a series of photos with my phone as I advanced. Eventually, I found myself within arm's reach from the owl – and, to be clear, I have arms that would rival a T-Rex's in terms of shortness.

Sadly, all my photos were awful, partly due to the dim light, but mostly due to my thumb. After moving my thumb, I should have used a flash, but I was worried that it might affect the creature's night vision. When you are that close to an owl, you don't want to be mistaken for a small rodent.

This wasn't the first time I have gotten extremely close to a Barred owl. They are, in my experience, are not too concerned by having people nearby, which leads me to conclude that they taste horrible.

My own field research has shown me that wild animals that taste good are more prone to running or flying away when humans approach. That's why skunks and cormorants always overstay their welcome. Wild deer, turkey, moose, bear, grouse, woodcock, squirrels, and most ducks are rightfully suspicious and flee or take flight when people approach. Even turtles leave as quickly as they can at the mere mention of soup.

Not Barred owls though. They just hang around, looking all smug and secure in the knowledge that there is no way a human is going to eat a creature that regularly consumes rodents and bugs – at least without the judicious use of ketchup.

In any case, I spent about five minutes with that owl and, I can't say we bonded. In fact, aside from wanting to know who cooks for me, it showed a remarkable lack of interest.

I, on the other hand, thought this could be the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

That's why I went back in the house and asked Jenn if we happened to have a wizard's outfit.

To which, she answered, "Why this time?"

I then told her about my idea to perhaps take up wizarding (part-time) now that I had a close association with an owl.

"I don't get it," she said.

Despite reading all those *Harry Potter* books, Jenn is not the brightest lightning bolt in the wand when it comes to wizardry. If she was, she would have realized that most wizards (and magic users in general) have a familiar.

I know I don't have to explain this to you, but on the off-chance Jenn is reading this column, a familiar is an animal that bonds with the wizard or witch.

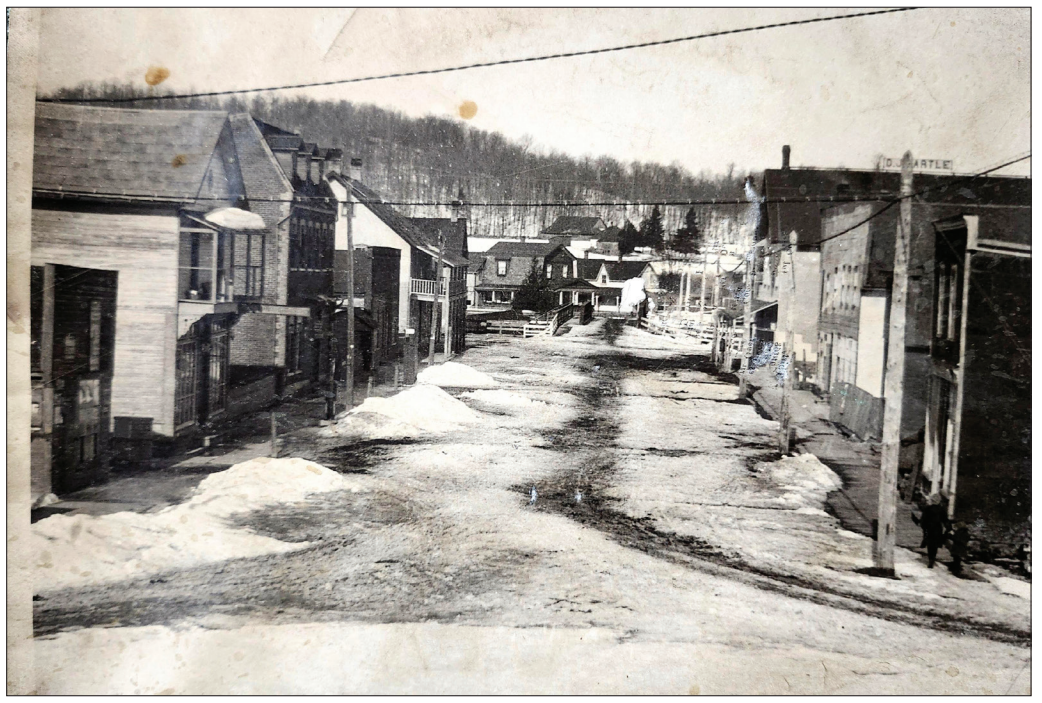
According to the Internet, a familiar is summoned to service by a sorcerer or wizard and magically bonded to the spellcaster, after which it becomes a magical creature with greater intelligence and new powers.

Sadly, we didn't have any wizard costumes handy, so I just had to go out there wearing a blanket and a paper cone to plead my case to the owl.

"Look," I said, as I waved a chopstick, "if I was a wizard, and you consented to being my familiar, I'd split the dragon hoards and the fireworks display earnings with you ..."

The owl didn't even consider it. Instead, it just looked down at me, and rudely took off for parts unknown.

It was just another case of familiarity breeding contempt.



pic *of the* past

Patrick Dawson submitted this photo of the main street in Minden from what he believes to be either the 1920s or 1930s. He noted that his grandparents, Lorne and Annie Dawson, were long-time residents of Minden. His dad, James Keith, and aunt and uncle Muriel and Bob grew up in the village. /submitted

Once young

Our road Down

Sharon Lynch

SHE WAS a young nurse ready to do her duty. He was a one-time wild young man caught up in the excitement of the times. To celebrate their engagement, they visited a photography studio in the big city. It was to be an announcement to the world of their intention.

One hundred years later they still stood, frozen in time amidst the artificial setting of drapery and misty light. In the photograph they are turned slightly toward each other – he the smartly-uniformed foot soldier and she in her crisp nurse's garb. Of course they had no idea of all that lay ahead.

When Amy first saw the picture, she was struck with a wave of sadness. While she had few details, and was shy about asking, she knew the young man had died in the trenches. She knew the young woman never married but continued nursing the rest of her working life. It seemed like such a sad story, a tale of what-might-have been. But Amy knew it was only one of many, many others.

Looking at her great-aunt, she tried to see the woman as she would have been when the picture was taken. So young and in love. How did that person become this shrunken old woman with a face of wrinkles leaning on a cane?

The whispers in the family were that great-auntie was too fond of sherry and could get quite raucous watching her hockey games on the television. Now she lived with her two sisters in a little house in the west end of that same big city she had first visited so many years before.

Amy's parents described great-auntie as 'a character'. An adult now herself, Amy figured all that the older woman had experienced could have made her more than 'a character'. Post-traumatic stress disorder was not a term used in the early days of the nineteen-hundreds. But to see soldiers with missing limbs and worse would have erased any illusions that life was fair. It wasn't until Amy was an adult that she realized all her great-aunt had lost in those horrific days of the war.

Of course no realization showed on the idealistic faces looking out from that faded photo. When the war was over, they would be together and have children and a good life in their young, free country. The bad people would be defeated. All the two of them had to do was follow the rules and do their best. Everything would be fine in the end.

When Amy was a child, great-auntie would often baby-sit her. While her parents went out on a Saturday night, Amy and the older woman would munch pretzels and watch television before bedtime. Great-auntie sipped her sherry and Amy enjoyed the treat of orange crush as they sat side-by-side on the rec room chesterfield. Sammy the dog was usually curled up on one of their laps.

Amy never asked great-auntie about those war years or what came after. She was too afraid.

Editor's notes

- Please note that this edition of the paper was produced on Nov. 10. Coverage of local Remembrance Day ceremonies will be featured in next week's editions.

- In last week's edition, in the story *Arts Centre moves ahead with building plans*, the writer cited 4.5 acres were purchased for the build. It was later noted that the actual property size is 14.5 acres. We apologize for the error.

- In our story covering Diwali last week, there was the noted absence of one particular organizer who has dedicated time and effort to the event. The organizers wish to acknowledge Jagdish Shrimali and all he has done to work towards a successful event.

The Fast Lane Monday afternoon bowling league

The Fast Lane Top Bowling Scores
Nov. 3

Women
High Single
Cathy Snell 279
High Single with Handicap
Cathy Snell 291
High Triple
Cathy Snell 605
High Triple with Handicap
Leane Tucker 665

Men
High Single
Jeff Adams / Mike Vuksic 218
High Single with Handicap
Mike Vuksic 284
High Triple
Jeff Adams 533
High Triple with Handicap
Jeff Adams 698

New bowlers are welcome to join.

Submitted

Share the warmth

Once again, the people of Haliburton County have shown just how caring and generous their community can be.

Because of your incredible response to SIRCH's Share the Warmth campaign, donation bins across the county overflowed with coats, boots, hats, mittens, and scarves for men, women and children— all ready to bring comfort and dignity to neighbours who need them most.

Now, it's time to share that warmth!

If you or someone you know could use quality winter gear, please come to our Free winter gear giveaway event. Everyone is welcome, no questions asked.

Bancroft Thrift Warehouse, Saturday, Nov. 15 from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

With your help, we're making sure no one faces winter unprepared.

Together, we're proving that when our community comes together, kindness keeps us all warm.

For more information, call SIRCH Community Services at 705-457-1742 or visit www.sirch.on.ca.

Submitted

U-Links seeking bright ideas

It's that time of year again! Community Members of Haliburton County – U-Links, a leading organization facilitating community-based research collaborations, is inviting community groups in Haliburton County to submit their research project proposals for the upcoming winter/spring semester. This call aims to foster partnerships between community organizations and student researchers from Trent University and other post-secondary partners to address important issues impacting the social, cultural, environmental, and economic aspects of the county.

Since 1999, U-Links has been instrumental in connecting community organizations with talented student researchers, resulting in numerous successful research projects. By participating in this initiative, organizations gain access to valuable research insights that can inform decision-making processes, increase capacity and contribute to the betterment of Haliburton County.

No research background? No problem! Our staff are here to guide you through each step of the process. All you need is an idea or identified problem within Haliburton County, and we will assist you in developing a comprehensive project proposal and identifying the appropriate research questions. Whether your project relates to community development, health sciences, forensics, environmental sciences, or any other field, our dedicated professionals will provide the necessary support needed to bring your idea to life.

To give you an idea of the diverse projects we facilitate, here are a few examples of ongoing community-based research projects in the 2025-2026 academic year:

- Loon Artificial Nesting Platforms Study
- Development of a Hazardous Algal Bloom Reporting Framework
- Traditional Fireworks Alternatives Study
- Lake Association Benchmarking Study

In addition to research projects, U-Links also offers opportunities for community-service learning (CSL). This unique form of experiential education allows students and community members to collaborate on specific activities or events with tangible outcomes. One such example is the annual Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival, where Environmental Science students from Trent University and community members work together to organize and facilitate educational activity stations. Another example is a recent re-naturalization initiative for the Glamor Lake Cottagers Association, where students from Trent University assisted with plantings to stabilize a sensitive shoreline after a hydro line clearing.

The deadline for contacting us to discuss your project ideas or topics is Nov. 24.

Join U-Links in making a difference in Haliburton County through community-based research. Together, we can create positive change and contribute to the sustainable growth, knowledge capital and informed decision making of our community.

For more information and to see examples of our previous and available research projects please visit www.ulinks.ca. Contact our Program Coordinator, Frank Figuli at coordinator@ulinks.ca or phone our office at 705-286-2411.

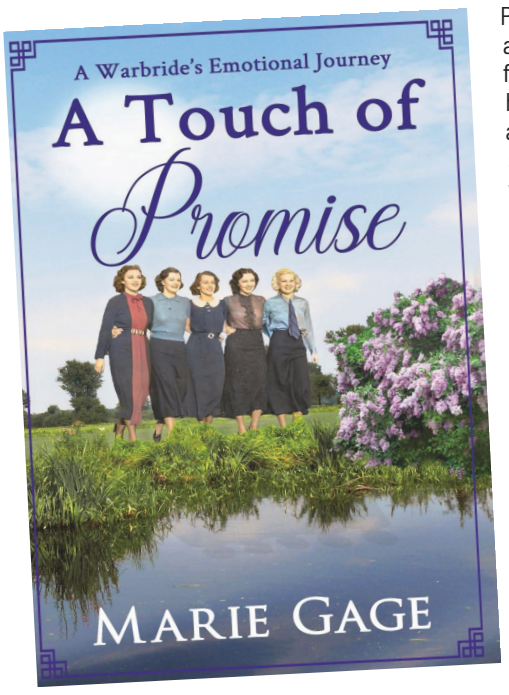
Submitted

Minden Memories

Local Minden resident James Stevenson, standing on a wooded trail in winter. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

HALIBURTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Book of the Week



In April 1947, twenty-one-year-old Pearl Griffith leaves England to marry a Canadian soldier she loves, only to find herself isolated and mistreated by her new mother-in-law. Far from home and struggling to adjust, Pearl finds solace in an unlikely circle of women who share their own stories of loss and resilience. When she begins volunteering at a psychiatric institute, she witnesses the lasting toll of war on veterans and their families, gaining new purpose and strength. As her home life begins to shift, Pearl must decide how to reclaim her confidence and sense of self. Local author Marie Gage's heartfelt novel celebrates the courage and connection that sustain women through love, hardship, and renewal.

A Touch of Promise by Marie Gage is available at the Haliburton County Public Library as a book or Book Club Set. Visit haliburtonlibrary.ca to place a hold or learn more.

Wilberforce Red Cross Outpost celebrates history

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Quilters putting together a past quilt at the Wilberforce Red Cross Outpost. Pictured, Joan Noble, Hilda Clark, Jill Lee and Linda Cameron. /submitted

The heart of a community is woven into its stories.

For a community like Wilberforce, while its population may be small, its stories run deep.

And many of those stories are rooted in the Red Cross site, in the heart of the community.

"It was quite a big thing," said Barb Schofield, who runs the National Historic Site now, and has family ties back to its very early days."It made a huge difference in the community."

The Schofield family settled in the area in 1910, and Barb's grandfather's brother, Alfred Schofield worked for the Children's Aid Society. When he returned to the community after World War I, his perspective on the needs of the community had shifted. "Alfred started to note a lot of women and children dying in childbirth," shared Barb, referencing the closest doctors being hours away at the time. "He wrote to the Red Cross, asking for a nurse to come."

Shortly after, Alfred heard back from the established organization. "They told him that if he had a building, they would send a nurse."

Through community efforts, Alfred secured a site, and by February, 1922, the first nurse arrived in Wilberforce, officially becoming Ontario's first Red Cross Outpost Hospital. From that first move, it was noted that sending support to rural hubs proved to be a successful model. "They spread all over Ontario from this one original idea," said Barb, noting that she herself was later born in Haliburton's Red Cross Outpost, formerly located in the now-used Canoe FM station.

The Outpost was operated by live-in nurses until 1957, but continued to provide community medical services until 1963, when it officially ceased operation. In 2003, it was declared a National Historic Site of Canada.

While the site offered a variety of medical treatments and support, it also became a community hub. "Nurses who served at the Wilberforce Outpost established themselves as valuable assets to the area, not only in their role at the Outpost but through participation in community activities," reads the museum website. "Indeed, the Outpost itself became more than a treatment centre, serving frequently as the site of card parties, various social activities, and the focal point of holiday gatherings."

Since ending medical offerings in the 1960s, the facility now operates as a museum, owned by the Municipality of Highlands East, and rented to the Wilberforce Heritage Guild. Barb Schofield has returned to the community after living in the city for a number of years, and is committed to sharing the stories of the historic site.

She noted that visitors are still helping her pinpoint names for former nurses and patients. One recent attendee identified a nurse they had long been seeking information on; bringing value to the stories of Wilberforce's history. "It's like someone just stepped out of the past," she said. "She's been rediscovered."

Schofield hopes to maintain the role of the site as a deeply interwoven piece of the community. Each year, the local Heritage Guild offers a craft sale. "This is one of our biggest fundraisers of the year," she said, noting that proceeds go towards building maintenance and upkeep.

The shining star of the craft sale is a hand-made quilt, made from scratch by community members. "All the ladies at the Outpost make it," she said of the local tradition. "They've been doing it for a long, long time."

The Holiday Craft Sale will take place on Nov. 29 at the Lloyd Watson Center from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch will be available from the Wilberforce Legion Ladies Auxiliary.

THE TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS
IN SEASON, EVERY SEASON

Tree Lighting Ceremony
November 14th, 2025
Come and help decorate the tree, sing some carols and kick off this festive season at the Village Green located along Bobcaygeon Road between Water and Newcastle St.
6:00pm-8:00pm at the Village Green

Christmas in the Village
November 15th, 2025
Celebrate the holiday season with this fun filled day. Join us for festive fun and community spirit! Live music, visit with Santa, local vendors and seasonal crafts.
11:00am - 3:00pm at the Cultural Centre

Santa Claus Parade
November 15th, 2025
The parade begins at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena going along Parkside Street to Bobcaygeon Road, before finishing at the Township municipal parking lot.
Parade starts at 11:00am!

From boy to man: a young soldier's war experience

MARTHA PERKINS

From the Archives

Bob White signed up for the armed forces despite his father's pleas, and left North Bay for the harsh realities of war. /FILE

The following is a story from our newspaper archives, written by former editor Martha Perkins. It outlines the life of Bob White, a resident of Haliburton County, who contributed to the war efforts in World War II. White passed away at the age of 91 on April 9, 2015. We value and appreciate his service to our community. The following story was first published in 2006.

Bob White has a smile that can only be called gleeful, perhaps with a little sly mischief thrown in for good measure.

And when he laughs, his eyes disappear into his cheeks, his mouth opens wide with delight and he throws his head back as if the laugh has just taken off like a sports car at a stop sign.

That's why it's hard to imagine him as a young 18-year-old trying to harden himself to the gruesome and bloody realities of war.

For two years during the Second World War, from 1943 to 1945, White was an orderly with the Royal Canadian Medical Corps. It was his job to help with the wounded, give comfort to the dying and prepare the bodies of the fallen for their last trip home. He was confronted with what a bullet or a bomb or a grenade could do to a human body. He was aware that if he had been a few pounds heavier when he signed up with the armed forces, it could have been him lying on the stretcher.

Although in many ways the war didn't change him, it certainly did transform the naive boy from North Bay into a man. When you look at one of his earliest photos in his uniform, you'd think he was a 12-year-old kid playing soldier. Even in the picture of him in Italy in 1944 he looks incredibly young. Surely the people we sent to war for six years were older than this, not as young, not as full of the promise of a life yet to be lived.

"You did what you had to do," the Haliburton resident says with a shrug of his shoulders, as if being surrounded with death and injury were commonplace. It's that simple.

Bob's father didn't want Bob to sign up. A veteran of the First World War, Bob's father had been gassed and taken prisoner after the battle of the Somme. He knew a lot more about what his son was getting himself into. But all of Bob's friends were joining "and I thought it was time to leave home and be on my own."

North Bay was a small railroad and mill town in those days; Bob could walk from one end of town to the other and he thought that joining the armed forces would allow him to expand his horizons a little bit.

He wanted to join the navy but there was no navy recruiting station in North Bay so he signed up with the army instead. He asked to be an infantryman in the 48th Highlanders like his father but the army wouldn't let him.

"It seemed that day they put everyone in the medical corps; you had no option."

His size probably had a lot to do with it, too. He was 5'10" and only 108 pounds. "The packs weighed more than I did."

He tried a few more times along the way to join the infantry but they wouldn't budge him from the medical corps.

He got his basic training in Newmarket before being put through his paces at Camp Borden. Then it was on to a train to Halifax where he, and 5,000 other young soldiers, boarded the Queen Mary.

By 1943 the stately ship had been stripped of all pretences of a luxury liner. "We were sleeping all over the place," says White, glad that he wasn't one of the men who suffered from the "awful" seasickness that made the journey unbearable for many.

The Queen Mary was deemed fast enough not to need an escort across the Atlantic Ocean. Zigzagging her way across the empty expanse of nothingness, it took the ship only seven days to reach Britain. They landed in Scotland and then were sent to the holding unit in Aldershot, England. That's where White learned that for the rest of the war, his home would be with the 5CCS — the 5 Casualty Clearing Station.

White describes his job simply: "We took care of the wounded."

As the Canadian infantrymen he so envied fought their way across Italy, the 5CCS was a few steps behind with their moving hospital. "We were in deserted buildings or under canvas," he says. When asked if it was anything like the movie and television series *M*A*S*H,* he laughs and says, "It wasn't as funny."

Everything was transportable - the operating room, the laundry, the pharmacy and infirmary. The injured men didn't stay long with the CCS before being transferred to a more stable hospital.

Those injuries could be horrendous. White says the battlefield terrain seemed to play a role in the type of injuries because one day most of the injuries were in the chest area; a week later the men's stomachs would take the hit.

Asked how he dealt with the gory realities of war, White says, "You had feelings for the men but you see so many. You get hardened. If you were too soft you'd never make it. You'd go crazy.

"But sometimes you thought about [the injured soldiers'] folks and whether they'll make it home. A lot died."

How surprised he was the day he recognized one of the young men brought in on a stretcher. "I used to chum around with him in North Bay," White remembers. "He came into the CCS all full of mud. He died of his injuries later on but he had the chance to get home."

But getting to Italy proved to be the scariest part of the war for White.

After being assigned his unit, the 5CCS boarded a boat far less regal than the Queen Mary. The trip to Italy via Sicily lasted three weeks and took them through the Straits of Gibraltar. That's when his ship was bombed.

"They put you below deck and you hear the machine guns going off and the bombs dropping. It was scary. They hit the boat behind us but they never got us."

It was with a grateful heart that he landed on Italy's terra firma.

White couldn't help but be a bit of a tourist in this wonderfully foreign land. Most young men growing up in North Bay didn't get much of a chance to see the world so he soaked it in. "We used to go into town every once in a while and get a bit of vino into us," he says. (Vino is one of the few Italian words that White can remember today. He became bilingual when it came to ordering food and drink.) "We were always on the move so we didn't have time to get too many friends. The townspeople never bothered with us."

One leave was spent in Rome. Even a mention of the fabled city makes his eyes light up. "Beautiful," he says, and if the one word doesn't say it all, the expression on his face does. "The buildings were fascinating. Rome was in good shape. The Germans respected the city, which is good because they would have destroyed a lot of history. Florence was an interesting city, too."

Perhaps given this predilection for vino, the men weren't given too much time off. Your day began at 6:30 in the morning. After breakfast you'd work a 12-hour shift, have something to eat and then be put on guard duty, or given some other light responsibility.

The big fight for the allies was Monte Cassino. After a monastery atop the mountain was bombed by the Americans, the Germans used the ruins to shoot on the approaching forces. The fighting was fierce. White could hear the guns, see the smoke from the mountain, and witness the human toll of the battle first-hand. The battle lasted for days.

Again pressed to describe how a young man from North Bay coped with such stress, White doesn't have much to say. Like many veterans, he's compartmentalized his memories and put the bad ones into storage.

"You just go ahead and do what you're supposed to do," he repeats.

But wasn't he ever scared, anxious, wishing he was back home, no matter how boring home seemed before he left?

"Sometimes in an air raid you wonder if you'll ever get up in the morning again. But then you fall back to sleep. If it was going to happen, it was going to happen. There's not much you can do about it."

He knew that in many ways he was lucky to be in the medical corps, which suffered few fatalities. Ironically, the friend of his who died was enjoying some R and R away from the camp.

"We were out on a rest period, and we had a route march. After the march we had a swim in the river. He dived in and never came up. I think he got stuck in the mud. They had to use dynamite to blast him out of the water."

A fer advancing across Italy, the D-Day invasion opened the door to the rest of Europe for the allied forces. White got a boat to Marseilles and then quickly crossed France by train. They got off in Belgium and continued their way into Holland. There was still fighting as the Germans retreated but "it was pushing the

see 'YOU page 11

‘You get hardened ... if you were too soft you’d never make it’

from page 10

end of the war and it wasn’t as stressful.”

On Victory-in-Europe Day, White was in the small Dutch town of Oss. “We never got to go out to celebrate,” he says of his disappointment with what should have been a day of jubilation. “We couldn’t even get a glass of beer. There wasn’t one to be had.”

Since the war in the Pacific was still going on, White was given three choices: he could volunteer for the Pacific, stay in Europe to help with the occupation or go home to Canada. He signed up for the first two and as luck would have it, he was sent back across the Atlantic to begin his journey to the ocean on the other side of North America.

First landing in Halifax, he was aboard a ship bound for a training base in America when the United States dropped the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima. “So ended that escapade.” And so too ended any hopes of joining in the celebration of the end of the six-year war. “It was an old boat so no beer,” he smiles.

It was an emotional train trip back to North Bay. So much had happened in his two years away. Again, he finds it hard to express what he was feeling.

“You feel sort of different but... I don’t know. A bit more grown-up than when you left. It was nice to get home.”

The happiest to see him was his mother, for whom the war was fraught with worry and anxiety about her son. As Bob’s wife June says, when Bob returned to North Bay, “there was nothing like her son Bobby from that day forward.”

Bob had met June Terry at Sunnybrook hospital in Toronto in late 1952. It was a military hospital in those days — it still has a veterans’ wing — and he was an orderly. She was in the hospital’s first class of RNA trainees. (After the war White remained with the armed forces for a year, stationed at the prisoner of war camp for Germans in Monteith, hidden up in northern Ontario’s woods.)

They married in 1954 and White switched to a different type of government job, this time with customs and excise. They lived in Toronto and then moved to Bay Ridges and Hampton to raise their family. While in Hampton, June became involved with her daughter’s Girl Guide troop and, being June, then even more involved with Girl Guides, especially at its camp in Haliburton (where she was known as Cookie to young Brownies and Guides such as this writer.) They eventually bought a cottage here and the flirtation with Haliburton became a full-blown love affair. They moved here 20 years ago and haven’t had a regret.

This Monday, White will join the crowd at the Haliburton cenotaph. A bad hip has forced him to retire from the pipes and drum band but he’ll be there with fellow members of the Haliburton Legion.

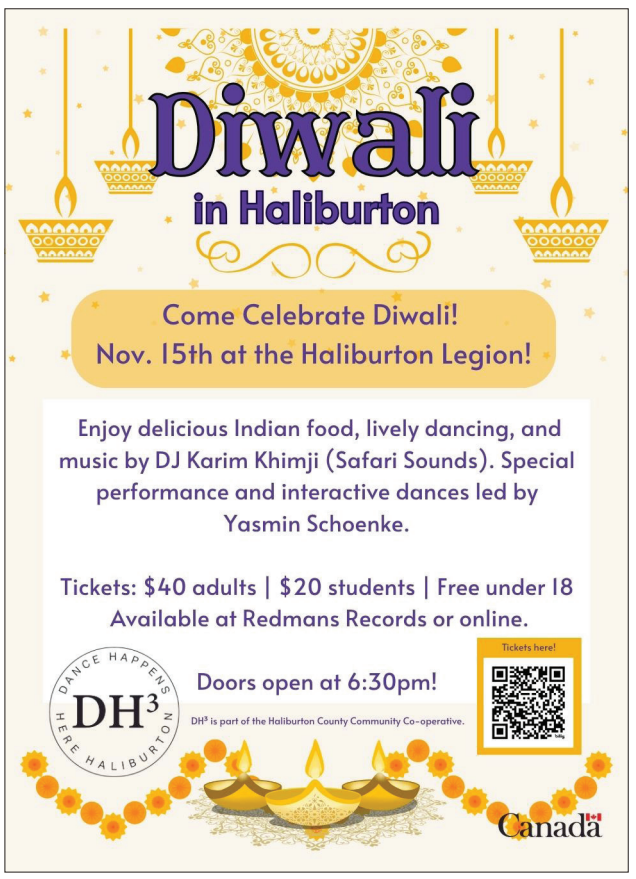
At 82, Bob White’s face belies his age, and the fact that there are very few veterans left. But, he says, it’s important to be there, to remember.

Where will his thoughts lead him?

Back more than 60 years.

“Mostly you think about all the boys who got killed and never came home, or who are wounded.”

The war might have hardened him, but Remembrance Day manages to break the shell every year.


Diwali
in Haliburton
Come Celebrate Diwali!
Nov. 15th at the Haliburton Legion!
Enjoy delicious Indian food, lively dancing, and music by DJ Karim Khimji (Safari Sounds). Special performance and interactive dances led by Yasmin Schoenke.
Tickets: $40 adults | $20 students | Free under 18
Available at Redmans Records or online.
Tickets here!
Doors open at 6:30pm!
DH³ is part of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative.
DANCE HAPPENS HERE HALIBURTON
DH³
Canada

HALIBURTON VILLAGE
SANTA CLAUS PARADE
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21st, 2025 ~ 6:30pm
A Canadian Christmas
True North Strong & Free
Merry Christmas
BANDS HORSES MARCHER BRIGHT LIGHTS
To enter contact
Jim Frost at 705 457-4031 or
jandmfrost@outlook.com
At the Town Tree, there will be caroling at 5:30 pm and Tree Lighting at 6:00 pm
CANADA POST POSTES CANADA
Canada Postal workers will be on the parade route collecting letters for Santa.
REMEMBER - NO PARKING ON HIGHLAND STREET
The parade is proudly brought to you by the Downtown Haliburton Business Association and the Haliburton & District Lions Club

THE Studio TOUR
HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS
Call to New Artists
To apply, visit our website at:
thestudiotour.ca
or scan the QR code to be taken directly to the application.
Application Deadline
Nov 21, 2025

A story of Remembrance

ROB MCCAIG

Guest Columnist

The story of Sergeant Warrant Officer Class 1 Arnold McCaig remains a great mystery in the McCaig family. /submitted

Lest We Forget and We Will Remember Them! The two phrases synonymous with Remembrance Day, the day we gather to honour those who fought for our freedom in WW1, WWII, the Korean war and the war in Afghanistan.

It's the 80th Anniversary since the end of WWII, where over 44,000 Canadians lost their lives and over 54,000 were wounded. Of the casualties the hardest hit was the Royal Canadian Army, followed by the RCAF and the Royal Canadian Navy. Can you believe by the end of WWII our Navy was one of the largest and the RCAF was the fourth largest in the world?

In the McCaig family there were six members who represented our country. My Mum, Nina, was a WREN in the Navy stationed at HMCS Cornwallis in Nova Scotia, My Dad, Keith, was a RCAF LAC Airframe Mechanic along with his twin brother Wally. My Uncle Clifford was a Sergeant in the Royal Canadian Army and a member of the Special Service Force Devils Brigade, Uncle Norman was a Private in the RCASC, an army infantry unit that stormed the beaches of Normandy. And, last but not least my Uncle Arnold was an RCAF Warrant Officer Class One, Air Gunner primarily on Halifax II Heavy Bombers.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, on a third generation family farm in Quebec just outside of Ormstown lived Archie and Effie McCaig, my grandparents, who gave birth to eight boys and one girl. In 1939 the war broke out and the conversations around the dinner table centered around a few of the boys that were interested in signing up to serve our country. Between 1940 to 1942, five of the eight boys were off for training leaving three boys and one girl to stay back on the farm to help their parents with the sprawling farm in Quebec.

Clifford McCaig was the first boy to enlist into the Royal Canadian Army and eventually earned the rank of Sergeant in the elite Devils Brigade, a Canadian and American commando unit rigorously trained in stealth tactics, hand to hand combat, the use of explosives, demolition, amphibious warfare, rock climbing and mountain fighting. Uncle Cliff played a heavy role in the Italian Campaign and was wounded twice. He was slated to meet up with one of his brothers, Arnold, while in Italy but was transferred to Rome because of his injuries. In a letter dated in June 1944, Arnold was disappointed he couldn't meet with Cliff, unfortunately it would have been their last words spoken to each other. Cliff made it back to Canada after the war, but brother Arnold didn't.

On October 8, 1941, three more McCaig boys enlisted into the RCAF: 19-year-old Keith McCaig, his twin brother Walter and 22-year-old Arnold McCaig. Keith and Wally trained as Airframe Mechanics and were posted to Britain and Arnold trained as an Air Gunner and was a part of the 148 RAF Squadron that flew Halifax Heavy Bombers out of Britain, Egypt, Malta and Brindisi Italy.

The last McCaig boy to leave the farm and fight for our country was Norman McCaig, who joined the Royal Canadian Army RCASC Infantry and was on the front lines in Normandy where he saved two of his crew members that were drowning. After that his Army Troop went on to liberate France and Belgium.

The sixth McCaig who joined the war effort was my Mum Nina. She lied about her age (like most who enlisted) to join the Royal Canadian Navy. She became a WREN and was stationed at HMCS Cornwallis in the spring of 1943 and stayed in the Navy until 1946. Before entering the Navy, the year previous in the summer of 1942, she met a good-looking Sergeant by the name of Arnold McCaig, the romance blossomed throughout the summer of '42 and Nina Bruyer became Nina McCaig and married Arnold McCaig on September 30, 1942, just five days after Arnold graduated from Air Gunner school in Ontario. They honeymooned in Quebec and the Maritimes before Sergeant Arnold McCaig shipped off to Britain where he was then posted to Egypt as part of the RAF 148 Squadron that flew Heavy Bombers Halifax MK II and Spitfires.

After success in Egypt, Malta, and Italy, Arnold's crew were posted to Brindisi Italy. During the whole-time overseas Nina and Arnold would trade love letters and care packages as rationing was becoming more prevalent.

In early June 1944 now Sergeant Warrant Officer Class 1 Arnold McCaig was seeing some positive signs that the war might soon be ending so the couple started to make plans for his return to Canada. They were looking forward to where he would be stationed, the couple talked about homes and areas in Canada they wanted to visit before settling down and planting roots in a community of their choice.

In a letter dated June 27, 1944, Arnold was thanking Nina for the care package of chocolates from her and was saying how his aunt sent over cans of milk and how his crew were very appreciative for the kind gestures. He ended his letter by saying how much he missed her and it wouldn't be too long before they would be in each other's arms again.

On June 28, 1944, at 2300 hours, Arnold McCaig's crew of eight set out in a special top-secret mission in a Halifax II Heavy Bomber towards Albania. They encountered "Flak" on the starboard bow and starboard quarter, the plane shuddered violently, the pilot said "bailout" then said "wait", then "bailout" again and four of his crew exited the plane, but there was no sign of rear gunner McCaig. The plane crashed and according to partisan forces there were three bodies observed at the scene.

The devastating news was delivered to Warrant Officer Arnold McCaig's wife of only 21 months on July 20, 1944, while Nina was stationed at HMCS Cornwallis. The letter stated missing, a further letter stated he was alive and in a secret location, then another letter stated presumed dead, then another letter deceased. Warrant Officer Class 1 Arnold McCaig's body was never found, nor was the plane and he has no known grave but Sergeant Warrant Officer Class 1, Arnold McCaig is memorialized in Malta at the Commonwealth war Grave Monument. He truly is a brave hero.

A few years after the war Nina received a letter written in Italian, so she took it to a lady for translation. The lady started to cry hysterically and ripped it up into many small pieces. Until Nina's (Mum's) passing in 2012 she still never knew the contents of the letter, where her first husband's body was laid to rest, and why there were so many conflicting reports of Arnold's death. So, the McCaig Mystery continues...

Thank you for letting me share our family's story, one of many thousands of stories from the very brave men and women who served our country and especially those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Lest We Forget!

We will Remember them!

A glimpse of some local volunteers from the annual Water Festival. /submitted

‘Groundwater’ volunteers honoured at 20th anniversary

Volunteers and community partners gathered November 1 to celebrate 20 years of inspiring local students to become water stewards through the Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children’s Water Festival (HMKCWF).

Since 2005, the festival has welcomed more than 17,000 elementary students from across the Trillium Lakelands District School Board to hands-on learning activities about water science, conservation, and protection.

The 20th anniversary event recognized “Groundwater” volunteers - those who have supported the festival for more than a decade - and celebrated the growth of this unique environmental education initiative, hosted annually in Haliburton County.

Norm Thomas, past chair and current Director of the Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL), was honoured for his leadership in securing resources and guiding the festival since its beginnings.

Rick Whitteker, one of the festival’s founders and long-serving Steering Committee chair, reflected on milestones such as the move from the Frost Centre to Kinark Outdoor Centre and growth from 200 to nearly 1,000 students annually. His ongoing role as an educator and advisor continues to strengthen community partnerships and programming.

Irene Heaven, the festival’s longest-serving Coordinator until 2022, was also recognized. “The HMKCWF really creates everlasting ripples of good stewardship,” she shared, describing her years of work as “beyond fulfilling as an educator.”

Other long-serving “Groundwater” volunteers honoured included Cammy Smith, Carolynn Coburn, Heather Reid, Eric Lilius, Joan Grant, and Joleen Thomas.

This year’s volunteer team - ranging in age from 12 to 96 - was thanked for ensuring the festival’s continued success. Organizers plan to make this post-festival recognition an annual tradition.

-Submitted

Pictured, Norm Thomas, past chair for the Water Festival and current director of FEEL was celebrated during the Volunteer Recognition event on Nov. 1. /submitted

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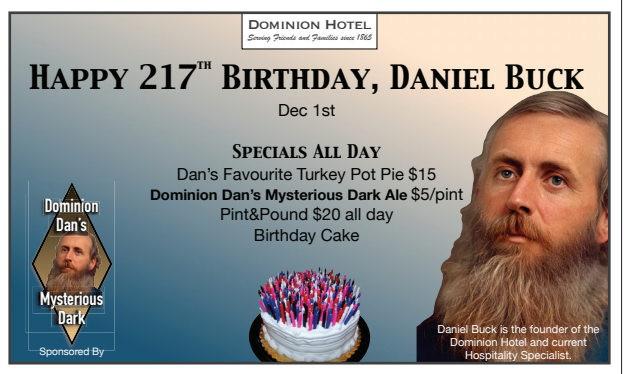
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Dorset Christmas tree past its prime

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Christmas in Dorset will be looking differently this holiday season.

It is a Christmas tradition for Algonquin Highlands to decorate a tree in Dorset Lions Park. In the past, the Christmas tree had a plaque that read "The Dorset Community Christmas Tree, Igniting the Spirit in our community since 1994." The plaque is no longer on display.

"It has become apparent over the past couple seasons that the historic Dorset Community Christmas Tree has gone past its prime," said Chris Card, parks, recreation, and trails manager for Algonquin Highlands.

The topic was discussed over a council meeting held partially virtually on Nov. 6.

Card says that in the past year, AH investigated the opportunity to plant a new mature tree on-site.

"We identified that there is a tree on-site that we would like to offer as an option and survey the community about it," he said.

Card proposed that AH council can let the public decide on whether to use the white pine to the right of the gates of the park. The other option is to plant a new tree on-site.

This year, both trees will be decorated to provide an opportunity for the community to see what the proposed tree looks like.

"The tree is already there, it's healthy," said Card. "There is some risk involved when you are spading in a mature tree on a new site."

Card wants to recognize that the traditional Christmas tree has heritage attached to it.

"What I'd like to do at the same time is to reach out to the committee and have a discussion with them about a new plaque and dedication type ceremony when we do finally officially designate a new tree," said Card.

AH Mayor Liz Danielsen says that she thinks that lighting both trees at this year's tree lighting ceremony is a good idea.

Deputy Mayor Dailloux asked where a potential new tree could be planted in the park.

Card says that a new mature tree would be planted near the front behind the gardens as it would allow access to power outlets and to allow access for events like toboggan races and to keep their green space free of obstacles.

Dailloux also asked about having a gratitude ceremony during the tree lighting this year.

"A couple of minutes just to honour and acknowledge the importance of the tree and to thank the tree before we move on," she said.

Card says that the general location of a newly planted tree could be indicated on the survey.

Council voted in favour of the survey and lighting both trees at this year's tree ceremony.

Celebrate the holidays in Minden

Tree Lighting Ceremony – Friday, November 14

The Minden Hills Community Services Department invites the community to a Tree Lighting Ceremony in the Village Green along Bobcaygeon Road between Water St. and Newcastle St.

Join us from 6 to 8 p.m. and help decorate the tree, sing some carols and kick off this festive season!

Minden Rotary will be providing hot apple cider and Let's Get Local will be providing hot dogs with donations from local businesses.

Christmas in the Village – Saturday, November 15

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre invites the community to celebrate the holiday season at Christmas in the Village on Saturday, November 15 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This family-friendly event brings festive cheer to the heart of Minden with music, crafts, treats, and holiday activities for all ages.

Visitors can enjoy:

- Live performance by Gord Kidd from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- Visit with Santa (after the parade) from 12 to 1 p.m.
- Local Christmas Market Place featuring handmade crafts and goods
- Old-Fashioned Candy Shop
- Facepainting by Pockets the Clown
- Book Sale by Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library (FOHCPL) at the Minden Branch by the fireplace
- Christmas Ornament Crafts
- Santa Letter Writing Station
- Scavenger Hunts and Festive Decorations throughout the site
- Hot Chocolate

Join us as the Cultural Centre transforms into a cozy, festive village full of music, creativity, and holiday spirit.

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre is located at 176 Bobcaygeon Road, Minden, Ontario. For more information, visit the Cultural Centre's social media calendar page: www.facebook.com/mindenculturalcentre/

Santa Claus Parade – Saturday, November 15

The Minden Hills Santa Claus Parade takes place on Saturday, November 15, starting at 11 a.m.

The parade will start at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena and travel along Parkside Street before moving south along Bobcaygeon Road to Newcastle Street and finishing at the Township municipal building parking lot off of Milne Street.

Bring non-perishable food items to be collected by Minden Community Food Centre volunteers for the food bank.

Road Closure will begin at 10 a.m. Bobcaygeon Road to Newcastle Street, no parking of vehicles on Bobcaygeon Road.

Submitted

Crosswalk receives support across the board

from page 1

"He was 110 per cent supportive," said Schell.

Prior to contacting Schmale, Schell had been sent a photo of a commemorative crosswalk by Minden Legion's former President Wendy Bolt.

"My uncle was in the Second World War and my brother served in the army," said Schell proudly.

"We wouldn't have the freedom to walk across the street without the soldiers."

While we take a moment every November 11 to honour those who have fought for Canada, Schell says it is important to be thankful every day for the lives of those who have dedicated themselves towards protecting Canadians.

After receiving support from fellow Legion members, Schell presented the commemorative crosswalk idea to Minden Hills council on Oct. 9. In preparation for his visit to council, Schell submitted a photo of a red and white lined commemorative crosswalk with figures of veterans on both ends of the crosswalk. The phrase 'Lest We Forget' is painted on each side.

Minden Hills Council unanimously supported the idea and said that they will work with the Legion to install the crosswalk. Schell says that he has been contacted by Gentem Canada to get some ideas toward the project.

After speaking at the council meeting, Schell says that he has had people from both Minden and Haliburton approach him on the street to encourage him.

"I have had people come up and say 'keep on going, it sounds great'," he said.

For now, Schell will be bringing the idea back to the Legion where those in charge will be giving the final say towards the project.

When the commemorative crosswalk is completed in Minden, Schell says that he hopes that it will encourage other areas in Haliburton County to remember their veterans.

Schell says that he hopes the commemorative crosswalk is completed around May of next year.

He would also like to remind everyone that Minden's Remembrance Day ceremony will be taking place on Nov. 11 at 11 a.m. For the past few years, Schell has been acting as Sergeant-at-Arms. Everyone is welcome to attend the event.

"No matter the weather, the people of Minden are there," said Schell.

As both a community hub and supporter of veterans, there is a great importance to support the Legion's annual poppy campaign. If you see the opportunity to donate to your local Legion, it would be greatly appreciated. The money will go towards projects like Minden's commemorative crosswalk.

The idea for a commemorative crosswalk has spread throughout Legions across the province, with cities like Peterborough, Woodstock, and Windsor all announcing new commemorative crosswalks in the past few months.

Soon enough, perhaps we will see a commemorative crosswalk in every town.

Partnership Opportunity

TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS

Collection of Alcohol Containers at Township Waste Disposal Sites

The Township of Minden Hills is seeking interest from local service organizations who wish to enter into a Partnership Agreement with the Township for the collection of alcohol containers at a Waste Disposal Site.

The Township is interested in increasing resident access and participation in deposit return systems while providing opportunities to give back to the local community.

Interested organizations must be local and the proceeds must go towards benefiting the community.

Responsibilities of the Community Partner include:

- Regular pick up of containers, ensuring tidiness of collection site;
- Pay an annual administration fee of $200. These funds go towards the maintenance of the storage shed, signage, and maintaining the collection area;
- Provide annual reporting on total quantities collected.

When submitting notice of interest, organizations must provide a brief summary of their organization, where funds are being utilized in the community, and preference of Waste Disposal Site for the collection location.

The deadline to submit notice of interest is December 22, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

For more information please contact the Manager of Waste Facilities at 705-286-1260 ext. 572 or by email at waste@mindenhills.ca.

Please submit notice of interest to waste@mindenhills.ca

No changes to Snowball admission

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Algonquin Highlands township staff are aiming to keep prices manageable for this year's Snowfall Festival. /FILE

Despite the rising costs associated with inflation, the admission price to Dorset Snowball is staying the same.

Admission will remain an easy five dollar bill in exchange for a Dorset Snowball button. Children under two will still be allowed in for free.

Chris Card, Parks, Recreation, and Trails Manager for Algonquin Highlands says that AH has been consistently meeting their cost recovery amounts since the Snowball returned after the COVID-19 pandemic. He also says that the fee is ingrained in the 33 years of history of the event.

At a partially virtual AH council meeting held on Nov. 6, Card recommended maintaining the current entrance fee of $5 after tax, with no increase for this upcoming Dorset Snowball Winter Carnival.

Lisa Barry and Deputy Mayor Jennifer Dailloux expressed full support of keeping the current rate.

Dailloux says that in the future, AH may contact Lake of Bays and see if they have interest in offsetting the costs associated with the event, before any fees would be increased for participants.

Councillor Sabrina Richards brought up the possibility of having a committee associated with the Dorset Snowball. There could be the potential of making admission free and recovering costs through donations, silent auction, and other ventures.

Mayor Liz Danielsen said that if they were to create a Dorset Snowball committee, it would be formed early next year.

"I can certainly understand the potential for a focused group looking for donations," said Chris Card, Parks, Recreation, and Trails Manager for Algonquin Highlands. "I will point out that this past year would have been the first year in some time that we were, as staff, fronting entirely the outreach for donations and it was the highest amount it has been for the past four events."

Card noted that he foresees the donations to increase at the next Snowball.

"If we are making more revenue, we are increasing how good the event is," said Card.

While there have been discussions for the future of Snowball, for now, the admission remains a price of five dollars.

Haliburton Highlands OPP looking to identify a suspect

Members of the Haliburton Highlands Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are investigating an attempted break and enter in Minden.

On October 29, 2025, officers from the Haliburton Highlands OPP were dispatched to the Eighth Cannabis store on Bobcaygeon Road in Minden for an attempted break and enter.

Officers began an investigation and learned that sometime overnight from October 27 to October 28, 2025, a suspect had attempted to break into the business in Minden. The suspect also broke into a car that was parked overnight and stole items from it.

Police are actively conducting an ongoing investigation and are appealing to the public for assistance. Anyone with relevant information is urged to contact the Haliburton Highlands OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Should you wish to remain anonymous, you may call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or online at www.khcrimestoppers.com where you may be eligible to receive a cash reward of up to $2000.

Submitted

www.mindenhills.ca **In Case of Emergency Dial 911 / After-Hours Municipal Emergency Dial 1-866-856-3247**

THE TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS
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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Cemetery Clean Up is scheduled for November 18 – 30.

• Cemeteries will close December 1, 2025.

• Register today for youth programming! Floor hockey, creative minds, basketball or multisport runs weekly from November 10th until December 17th. Register online at www.mindenhills.ca/recreation or in person at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Township of Minden Hills is seeking interest from local service organizations who wish to enter into a Partnership Agreement with the Township for the collection of alcohol containers at a Waste Disposal Site, starting May 1, 2026. The deadline to submit notice of interest is December 22, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. Follow our social media for more details or email waste@mindenhills.ca for more information and to submit your notice.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

November 13 – Regular Council Meeting
November 27 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

• Don't miss the final week to see *Haycock: One Family's Canvas of Canada*, on display in the Agnes Jamieson Gallery until Saturday, November 15.

• Celebrate the holiday season by visiting the Minden Hills Cultural Centre for Christmas in the Village on Saturday, November 15 from 11 am – 3 pm! Enjoy a visit with Santa, live music by Gord Kidd, facepainting by Pockets the Clown, and the Local Vendor Christmas Market featuring handmade goods and seasonal crafts.

• The Agnes Jamieson Gallery will be closed November 18 – 21, 2025 as well prepare for our next exhibit.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

SANTA IS COMING TO TOWN

• Come and join us for the Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Minden Village Green along Bobcaygeon Road on Friday November 14th from 6:00pm - 8:00pm.
• Santa Claus Parade is on Saturday November 15th at 11:00am.

For more information on either event please visit the Minden hills online events calendar at www.mindenhills.ca/events.

STRATEGIC PLAN – HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF MINDEN HILLS

The Township of Minden Hills is working with Karen Jones Consulting Inc. to develop a Strategic Plan. We will be hosting sessions to gather information regarding priorities, opportunities for growth, collaboration, and more.
• Virtual Community Session – Wednesday, November 19, 2025 5:30 to 7:30 pm via Zoom to register email lfitton@mindenhills.ca
• Community Session – Thursday, November 27, 2025 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena Community Room 1
• Business Session – Friday, November 28, 2025 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena Community Room 1
The sessions are open to everyone. Kindly register to assist with session logistics. For information visit www.mindenhills.ca/newsroom or email admin@mindenhills.ca.

7 Milne Street, PO Box 359, Minden, ON K0M 2K0 705-286-1260 Toll Free: 1-844-277-1260 Fax 705-286-4917 Township.Minden.Hills Minden Hills@twpmindenhills @Township_MindenHills

Joy Chapple celebrated her 107th birthday at the end of October, and looks back on her life with happiness and celebration. /EMILY STONEHOUSE staff

107 years of gratitude, kindness, and Joy

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

For Joy Chapple, her name is fitting. She exudes happiness, gratitude, and pure joy.

And in her 107 years of life, she's put that into practice through each and every chapter.

Born in 1918 near the end of World War I, Joy has led a full life. "It's been a good life", she said, while candles flickered in her home and she watched the dreary autumn weather settle in across the lake "I don't think I'd change a thing".

Now calling Haliburton County her home for the past four years, Joy, who is also known as Ivy in some circles, was originally born in Bristol, England. She was the youngest of three siblings, and recalled a happy childhood, filled with love from her parents and regular dancing. "We would go ballroom dancing," she reminisced. "I used to go every Saturday".

It was during one of these dancing evenings that Joy met Cyril Chapple. "I was trying to pass him off to one of my girlfriends. I went over to talk to him, and I remember him saying 'I am quite capable of finding a girl on my own.' I will always remember that."

Joy and Cyril were married in England, and went on to have a son, Alan, before relocating to Canada in February 1953. "We came over on the Queen Mary," she said. "Took us five days. We just wanted to see how the other half lived".

When they settled in Brampton, Ontario, Cyril went to work on the Avro Arrow, a Canadian designed and built supersonic interceptor aircraft, and Joy found work for Roy Thomson, a newspaper proprietor and media-mogul, and the namesake for Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto.

Joy recalled applying for the position at the local town newspaper, *The Conservator*. "I answered an ad for the job on Thursday," she said, referring to an accounting role she had seen, "and by Friday morning, I had a knock at my door. It was the editor of the paper. He asked if I wanted a job."

Joy worked at the newspaper on and off for about six years, and left prior to the birth of her second child, Debra. After staying home with her young daughter for several years, Joy shifted gears. She had decided to seek a part-time job at the time, and wandered into Reitman's to do some shopping. The next thing she knew, she was offered a sales position. That part-time opportunity soon evolved into a full-time role, and ultimately to a management position. Joy worked for Reitman's for 17 years, managing several local stores during her time there. "I really enjoyed every job that I had," she mused.

Joy recalled a particular day when the Queen of England came in the 1970s during a Canadian tour. She was managing the Reitman's store at the time, and the staff were all eager to get a glimpse of the royal figure. She noted that they couldn't all flock out at once, so she asked them to put their names in a hat and agreed that they could each go to see the Queen in the order in which their names were drawn.

As the manager, she was the last to go out and figured she had missed her chance. But through the crowds, she saw a spot in a McDonald's parking lot. Armed with her camera and her binoculars, she set out to catch a glimpse of whatever she could. And to her surprise, the motorcade carrying the Royal Family stopped right in front of her. "She was in a beautiful grey dress," she remembered, "She was just so beautiful."

Shortly after, she was asked to leave, as she was in a secure location. But she was happy to comply, as she had everything she needed; shots of the young Queen, and wealth of memories to accompany them.

When asked about her successes in life, Joy credits the people around her. "I have just had good people,"she said. "I had wonderful parents, two wonderful kids, and the best husband in the world".

Joy and Cyril also enjoyed a long and rewarding retirement together. They were fortunate to spend the winter in Florida for 18 years. They valued this time together very much, and of course, looked forward to having family members visit them to take in the warm Florida weather.

Cyril passed away in 2006, and Joy reflected on the years with the man who made her the happiest. "I married the right man, who made me a better person," she said. "He was always so optimistic. That is why I try to see the good in everyone. He taught me that."

Joy recalled the chapter of their lives when she and Cyril were living in England in their 20s. Because Cyril was employed in the aircraft industry, he was not drafted during the war, but they still felt the challenges of World War II.

She has vivid memories of bringing her young son, Alan, to the movie theatre in the afternoons. She shared that she would wander to the bus stop, walking past all the cars that were set up on cinder blocks due to the shortage of gas. She would bring a pillow and a few baby bottles and settle in for the afternoon at the cinema with Alan. "He just loved the movies, always did," she said. Joy would make sure to get home before dusk, as all lights had to be turned off, and the city was blanketed in darkness as a deterrent to being a target for bombings.

> ***"I have just had good people. I had wonderful parents, two wonderful kids, and the best husband in the world."***
>
> — Joy Chapple

Sadly, Joy experienced what no parent ever wants to experience; losing her son, Alan in 2016. This was a tremendous loss for the entire family, and noted that she misses Alan and Cyril, and thinks of them both every day.

On October 29, Joy celebrated her 107th birthday. She was joined by family and friends. She currently lives with her daughter, Debra, and her son-in-law Ron. She warmly shared that they both take incredible care of her, and she could not live as she does without their love and support. She also enjoys being a grandmother to nine grandchildren, and a great-grandmother (affectionately referred to as Gigi) to eight great-grandchildren.

When looking back at her life, she couldn't pinpoint a specific chapter that was her favourite. She shared times of growth with Cyril, enjoyed the days at home being a mother to her children, thrived on the challenges and rewards of working in both the newspaper industry and the retail sector, and now cherishes the many visits and gatherings of friends and family. She noted she wouldn't do anything differently. "I've been pretty happy all along," she said. "I'm really just a pretty happy person. I always try to see the good. I've been very lucky".

Because for Joy Chapple, her name is fitting; a life lived with happiness, gratitude and pure joy.

Huskies Hockey

A close call

In a tense local game on Saturday, Nov. 8, the Huskies battled the Wellington Dukes through five periods before a tie was announced following double-overtime with a score of 1-1. The Huskies return to home ice on Saturday, Nov. 15 against St. Michaels. /TIM YANO staff photographer

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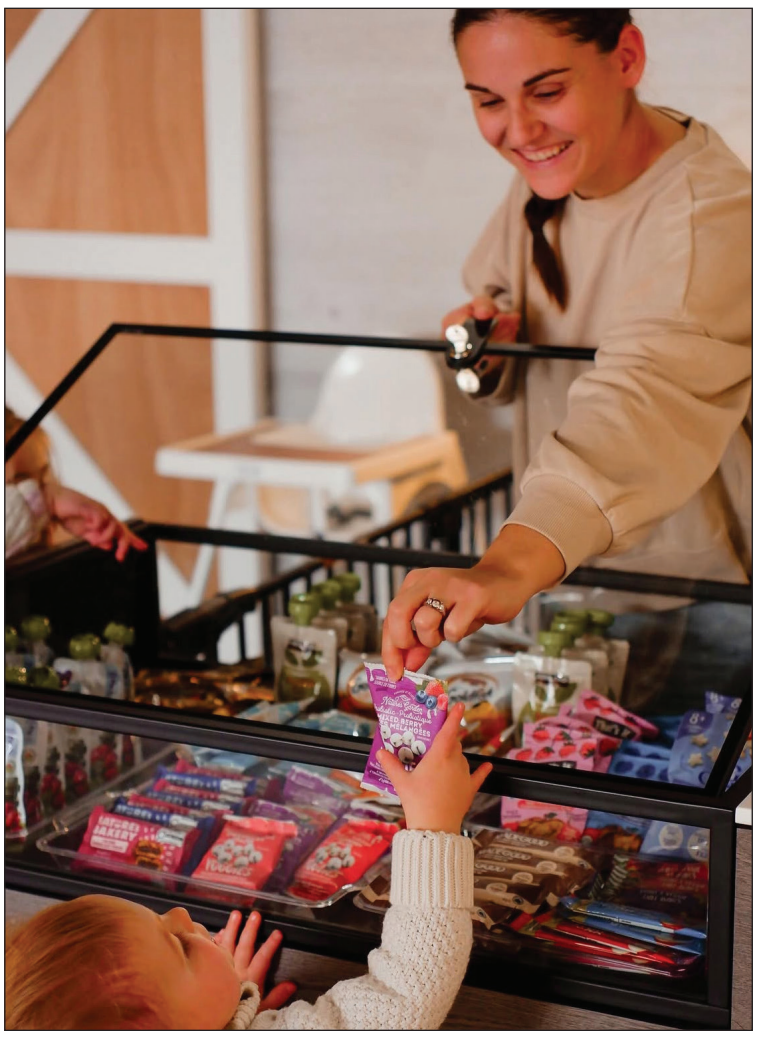
Little Beans Play Cafe in the heart of Minden aims to allow a safe and peaceful play space for both kids and their parents. /submitted



Owner of Minden's new Play Cafe, Janelle Nesbitt offers toddler-safe snacks to visitors. There are a variety of snacks and drinks available for all visitors.

New play cafe welcomes kids of all ages

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Parents and children rejoice, there's a new destination for play, imagination, and connecting right here in Minden Hills.

"It's always been a dream of mine to do something like this," said Janelle Nesbitt, the owner of the newly-opened Little Beans Play Cafe, "so I thought let's just do it."

Nesbitt, a mother of five and a full-time nurse at the local hospital, saw a gap in the community when her own kids were little. "I spent so much time travelling with other moms," she said, "going to places exactly like this out of town."

Like many parents, Nesbitt was seeking a safe space to bring her young kids, where they could connect with other kids, as well as other parents. A place that was creative and imaginative, and easily accessible for kids of all ages.

So, she made it herself. Housed in the former Beauty Basics building on Bobcaygeon Road in the heart of Minden, the bright and spacious location is warm and welcoming. Nesbitt sourced all her toys from a wooden toy company in Quebec, and are all designed for open-ended, imaginative play.

She has curated the entire space with mindfulness around both kids and parents. "So many toys can be so overstimulating," she said. "Flashing lights and batteries, it can all be too much."

Nesbitt noted that all the toys she has accumulated are Montessori-style, and safe for ages six-months and up.

In order to make the space relaxing for adults as well, Nesbitt offers select time slots that she encourages parents to book in advance. That way, there aren't too many kids running around at the same time, and all toys can be shared and played with in peace during the selected time slot. Between each window of time, Nesbitt and her team spend half an hour sterilizing each toy; a practice that as a nurse is of utmost importance to her in an effort to mitigate germs.

Nesbitt's five kids range between 18 months to 15 years, and through her parenting experiences, has noted the value of play spaces for parents to connect. "Parenting groups are so important," she noted. "So I think this is going to be such a fun connection space for them."

Having only been opened for a few short days, Nesbitt has already rented the space out for a number of private birthday parties and functions. "That way the mess stays here," she laughed. She shared that they would offer decorations and support during private functions, if anyone is interested.

Little Beans Play Cafe provides snacks, coffee, tea, and an opportunity to unwind for parents and the little ones play. Every detail is meticulously planned, right down to the rounded tables, accessible washrooms, and a quiet, separate nursing room, to ensure that the space maximizes comfort and safety for everyone visiting.

"I feel like our community really needed this," said Nesbitt. "We really needed something for kids to do."

Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
emily@haliburtonpress.com

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In it to win it

Evan Backus during the Kawartha senior boys' volleyball championship at HHSS last week. /ADAM FRISK staff

Hal High Red Hawks compete during the Kawartha senior boys' volleyball championship at HHSS last week.

Owen Whitteker goes up for a spike staff

Red Hawks coaches Justin Collins and Mike Gaffney react during the Kawartha senior boys' volleyball championship at HHSS. And no, Coach Gaffney is not asleep!

Amazing aphids of fall

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

That is not just snow dancing through the air. While tiny and appearing to float through the air, the white and blue puffballs we see in the fall are actually woolly alder aphids.

Aphids get a bad rap from gardeners, who often refer to aphids as 'plantlice' but before you write off woolly alder aphids as simple pests, know that they play a unique role in Ontario.

"They are abundant and ubiquitous throughout the highlands. Their range includes all of Ontario south of the tree line, from the Manitoba border to the Ottawa Valley and south to Windsor," said Basil Conlin, local entomology expert and founder of Haliburton Micromeadows. "In North America they occur from B.C. to Newfoundland and south to Florida and Texas."

Woolly alder aphids often begin life as an egg.

Go out and check your apple and maple trees on your property. It is highly likely you can see tiny black egg clusters near the tree's buds.

These eggs offer protection for the aphids for overwintering. In the spring, these eggs will hatch into immature nymphs. These nymphs can reproduce through parthenogenesis, without the need of a male aphid. Being both wingless and being able to reproduce asexually allows the woolly alder aphids to increase their populations rapidly in the spring.

At this stage the aphids will grow waxy coatings that appear cotton-like. By June, large clusters of fluffy white aphids can be seen on their host maples. As the aphids feed on the phloem of the trees, they produce a sweet honeydew substance that becomes colonized by a sooty mold fungus, giving them their fluffy appearance.

"All aphids feed on plant fluids using straw-like mouth parts," said Conlin. "Some aphids feed destructively as crop pests, but most aphids are generally harmless to their host plants."

Perhaps you have seen dancing aphids that have gone viral on Tiktok. While woolly alder aphids look similar to their cousin beech blight aphids, woolly alder aphids do not rapidly wiggle and dance at the sight of predators.

Instead, the woolly alder aphids have a symbiotic relationship with ants that consume the sweet honeydew substance that the aphids secrete. In return, the ants protect the aphids against predation and parasites. When the aphids consume from leaves, the leaves often curl up and die, providing cover for the aphids.

"Honeydew is rich in calories and sugar, which attract certain ant species that will defend and 'farm' the aphids for their honeydew," said Conlin.

These aphids may eat from maple and apple trees, but they are not known to cause any permanent damage.

In the summer, some of these nymphs will grow wings and reach sexual maturity. At this stage they will fly off to a new host plant to continue growing.

For woolly alder aphids, their host of choice is the speckled alder.

By fall, male aphids are produced and bred with to increase genetic diversity.

In the fall, both the male and female woolly alder aphids are looking for love. The aphids breed, lay eggs on their host plants and then die before the winter.

At this final stage of their life cycle, they do not eat anything and pose no harm towards any plants.

There is no cause for alarm at the sight of the white and blue woolly alder aphids. In fact, the aphids are significant indicators of a healthy ecosystem.

"Aphid colonies of most species are hubs of biodiversity," said Conlin. "Wasps (beneficial insects that control pests) also feed on honeydew, and presence of aphid colonies can be indicators of beneficial insect populations."

Moths will feed on the honeydew at night and butterflies like mourning cloaks and Compton tortoiseshells will feed on it during the day, says Conlin. Ontario's only species of carnivorous butterfly, the harvester will feed exclusively on woolly alder aphids as a caterpillar.

"The adults are beautiful harbingers of fall and the nymphs feed non-destructively on their hosts," said Conlin. "We have over 200 species of aphid in Ontario and very few of them are destructive pests."

Woolly alder aphids prefer areas near wetlands and the edges of forests. If you have a red or silver maple, or alder on your property, you have a higher chance of spotting the fairy-like aphids.

Basil Conlin is the owner of Haliburton Micromeadows. Haliburton Micromeadows is located at 1274 Lochlin Rd in Lochlin. They are open by appointment only and can be contacted at Haliburtonmm@gmail.com.

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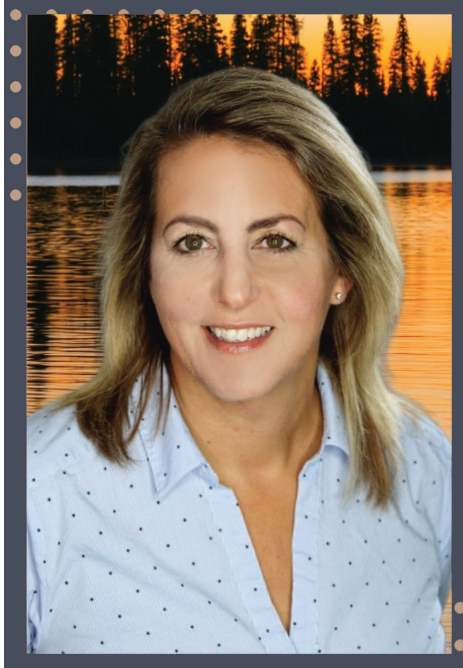
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	7		1	3				6
8	9	6		5			2	
	1			8	2	9		5
1				7	3		4	
	2		4	6	8			9
	5	4				8		
			9			2		
5		1		2	6			
9		2				5		4

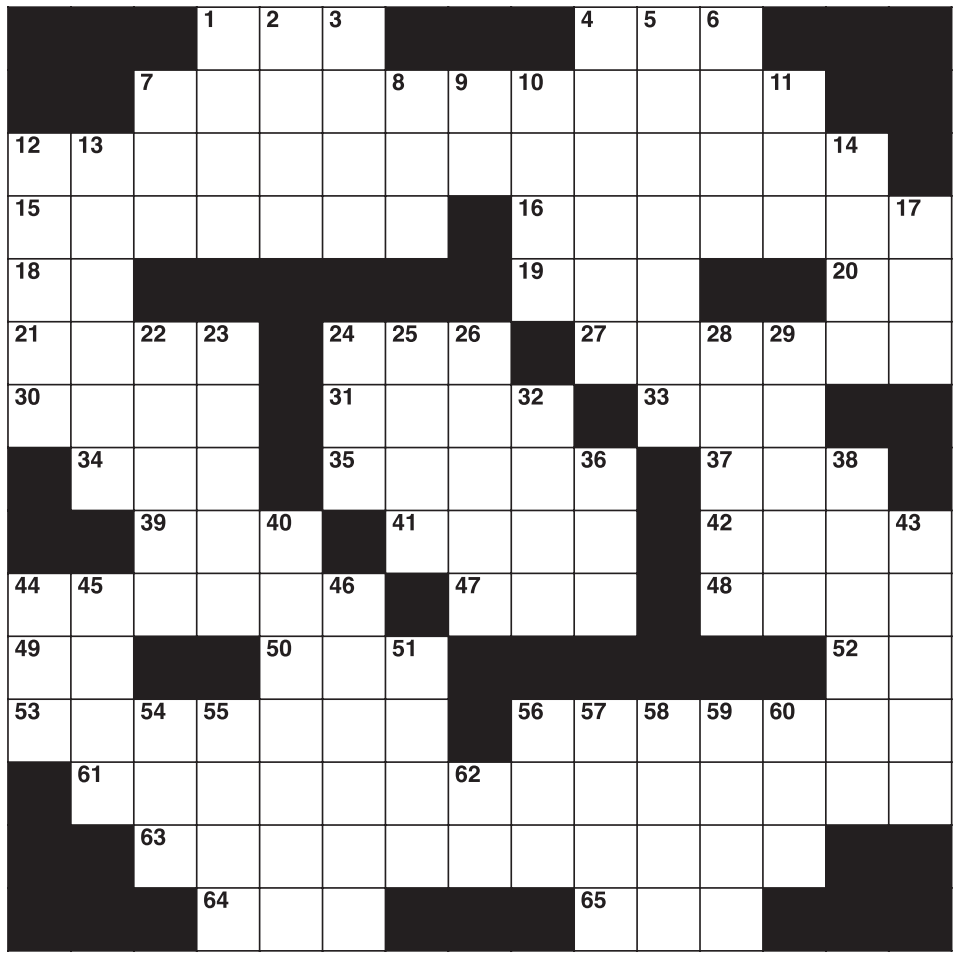
Level: Beginner

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 23



CLUES ACROSS
1. Expression of surprise
4. Keyboard key
7. One who works on lights
12. Notable childrenÕs story
15. Fall back into a bad pattern
16. Eye parts
18. Atomic #18
19. Of she
20. Farm state
21. One point south of southeast
24. British media entity
27. Asian garment
30. Drench
31. Expressions of pleasure
33. Turf
34. UK trade union (abbr.)
35. Bleated
37. Fifth note of a major scale
39. Paddle
41. Monetary unit of Italy
42. American classical pianist
44. Shuts down for the day
47. Seize
48. Soluble ribonucleic acid
49. Greeting
50. Some cars still need it
52. Atomic #22
53. Let go
56. Marched in public
61. U.S. residents, Mexicans and Canadians
63. Hostilities
64. Speak aloud
65. River in NE Scotland

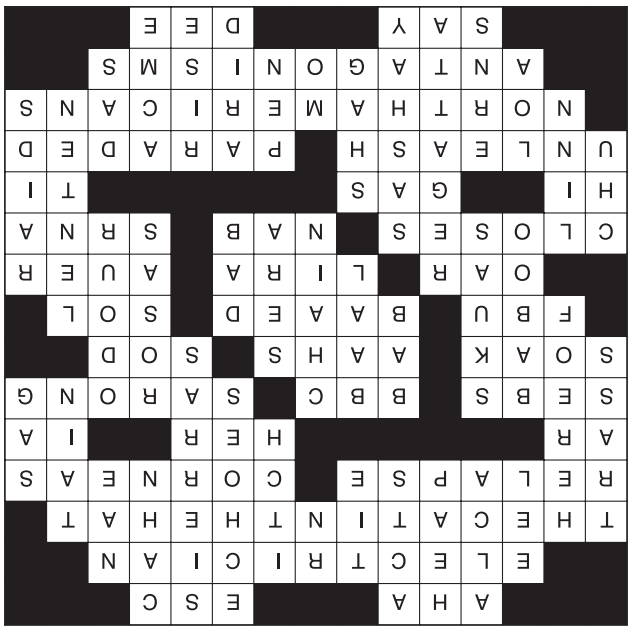
CLUES DOWN
1. Razorbill genus
2. Longtime Baltimore tight end
3. Performs on stage
4. Supports a sentiment
5. Rugged mountain ranges
6. Broadway songwriter Sammy
7. Snakelike fish
8. MenÕs fashion accessory
9. Hospital worker
10. Something to scratch
11. No (Scottish)
12. Volcanic ash
13. Of this
14. American jazz drummer Watts
17. Drop down
22. English dialect
23. Predatory seabirds
24. ImamsÕ deputies
25. Fertility god
26. Fence material
28. Parks and DeLauro are two
29. Distinctive smell (Brit.)
32. Protein-rich liquids
36. Touch lightly
38. Season for Catholics
40. Boat race
43. Police actions
44. Chinese river
45. Waterfall (Scottish)
46. Walk ostentatiously
51. Type of carpet
54. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
55. Sea eagles
56. An enclosure for confining livestock
57. Dry
58. An increase in price or value
59. The highest point of something
60. Government lawyers
62. Larry and Curly's pal

Answers on page 23

Paws for a picture

Snowflake Meadows hosted their annual open house on Saturday, with funds going towards their ongoing kennel costs and maintenance for the many pets the rescue site supports. Owner Kristyn Begbie took to social media to thank Morgan Fisher, Lindsay Bull, the many volunteers who supported the event and made it happen, and of course, Santa, for taking time out of his busy schedule to help support the many creatures, big and small, who utilize the services of Snowflake Meadows. /TIM YANO staff photographer

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



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2	7	5	1	3	9	4	8	6
8	9	6	7	5	4	3	2	1
4	1	3	6	8	2	9	7	5
1	8	9	5	7	3	6	4	2
3	2	7	4	6	8	1	5	9
6	5	4	2	9	1	8	3	7
7	6	8	9	4	5	2	1	3
5	4	1	3	2	6	7	9	8
9	3	2	8	1	7	5	6	4

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The Corporation of the County of Haliburton
Requires an
Engineering Technologist, Capital Works

Reporting to the Director of Public Works, the Engineering Technologist is responsible for the completion of all pre-engineering surveys, including design drawings and specifications, cost estimates, and tender preparation for construction and maintenance projects. This position will assist with budgeting and the updating of the Asset Management Plan for road, bridge and building needs. This position also performs construction inspection as required on capital road projects.

The successful candidate will have 2-3 years municipal work experience in road construction/ maintenance and knowledge of relevant legislation. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to work effectively with staff, contractors and the public. College diploma in Civil or Survey Technology or equivalent work experience. Proficient in Civil 3D-AUTOCAD, Arc Map and Microsoft Office Suite along with Total Station survey and GPS technology experience. The hourly rate for this unionized CUPE position is $34.86.

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for a more detailed posting and job description.

Please forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than November 27, 2025, at 4:30pm.

We thank all who apply for this position; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The County of Haliburton is an equal opportunity employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details.

In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act,* the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

The Corporation of the County of Haliburton
Requires an
Engineering Technologist, Highway/911

Reporting to the Director of Public Works, the Engineering Technologist – Highway/911 has primary responsibility for 911 data and civic address signage. This position is also responsible for coordinating new road processes, managing county road access, undertaking research and providing field reports as required.

The successful candidate will have 2-3 years municipal work experience in road construction/ maintenance and knowledge of relevant legislation. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to work effectively with staff, contractors and the public. College diploma in Civil or Survey Technology or equivalent work experience. Proficient in Civil 3D-AUTOCAD, Arc Map and Microsoft Office Suite along with Total Station survey and GPS technology experience. The hourly rate for this unionized CUPE position is $34.86.

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---

The annual craft Sale of the Wilberforce Heritage Guild. **HOLIDAY CRAFT SALE.** Lloyd Watson Centre, 2249 Loop Rd., Wilberforce. **Saturday, November 29**. Hours 9:00am to 2:00pm. Lunch will be available from the Wilberforce Legion Ladies Auxiliary. Lots of great items for sale from our large room of venders, including holiday treats & baked goods, Christmas decorations and a large variety of gift items. Questions & information for venders' contact Barb Schofield at 705-448-2598, or email wilberforcebarb@yahoo.ca

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The family of Freda Davis wishes to thank those who reached out, came to the funeral home and those who sent flowers, cards or have made donations in mom's name. Although her passing was unexpected, we were able to see her and hope she could hear us talking to her.

Thanks to Dr. Armstrong and the nursing staff that helped with mom during her short hospital stay.

Thanks to Dwaine, Lori and Chiara at the Haliburton Community Funeral Home for your excellent and professional care with mom and her family through this process. You made it much easier for us.

Ed and Sigh, Sherry and Bill,
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P4P

Places for People hopes next housing project will be in Minden

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History through art

Minden in 1860 depicted through landscapes at AJG

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Jamming at Camp Wanakita

Carnarvon musician Ross Daniels performs as the opening act at a concert hosted by the Haliburton County Folk Society on Nov. 14 at Camp Wanakita.

Angelica Blenich
Times staff

Bell gives 'significant' amount to Winterfest

Angelica Blenich
Staff reporter

The Ontario Senior Games has a new friend in Bell thanks to a funding announcement made on Nov. 15 by organizers of Winterfest 2011.

Bell has been named the presenting sponsor of the games after committing a significant, yet undisclosed, financial contribution and in-kind donations to the event, scheduled to take place throughout Haliburton County next February.

"We've had great support from businesses in the county but it is never enough," said Alan Clarke, chairman of the 2011 Ontario Senior Games. "Bell is making a big investment in high-speed Internet in our community and is now making a big commitment toward the success of Winterfest 2011."

Representatives from Bell shared similar sentiments on partnering with Haliburton County and contributing to the success of the games.

"I'm very confident these games will be the sporting highlight of the year," said Tom Blake, director of regional services for Bell Aliant. "Unless of course the Leafs win the Stanley Cup.

"Bell is privileged to partner with the local community and the county, to support people who live and breathe our services. I wish you much success with your event."

Funding specifics have not been disclosed, as games organizers and Bell have chosen to keep details to a minimum.

"It's a very significant sponsorship," said Myke Malone, general manager of the 2011 Ontario Senior Games, following the funding announcement. "At this point they are the largest corporate sponsor.

"Their contribution is a blend of a financial

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Kinmount food bank celebrates six years

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

No one deserves to go hungry. That's the unwavering belief of Kinmount's food bank.

After helping with a food bank in Coboconk for four years, volunteer Grace McDonald decided to open a food bank in Kinmount in 2019.

Many residents from Kinmount and the surrounding area were used to driving to Coboconk to seek assistance with food. McDonald wanted the community in her town to be able to feed themselves without needing to travel so far.

After coming to an agreement with the Kinmount Baptist Church, McDonald became president of the Kinmount and District Food Bank. Her community would no longer need to drive nearly 20 minutes to feed their families.

As a kid, McDonald grew up on a farm in Millbank. She can recall times when her family would fluctuate with and without food on the table.

After her lifelong career of working in department stores, McDonald itched to keep busy.

"I worked all my life," said McDonald. "I knew that I had to work so that is when I joined the food bank."

Secretary Sue Butts says that president McDonald's experience of working as a manager has been vital for their operations.

Located within the Kinmount Baptist Church, the Kinmount and District Food Bank started with five volunteers serving five clients. Over their six year run, their clientele has grown to 20 clients. Some of them are families that rely on the support of the food bank to feed themselves and their kids, while also providing food for their kids to take to school.

While Prime Minister Mark Carney has announced school lunch programs to test across the province, the program has not been implemented in Kinmount. Both Butts and McDonald understand the importance for kids to bring snacks and a good lunch to school.

Kids even have their own shelves at the food bank that adults are not allowed to touch.

This year, their volunteer force has four core members, with a fluctuating team that frequently assists with their operations.

Unlike other food banks, McDonald says that one thing that makes the Kinmount and District Food Bank unique from the other food banks is that they offer clients the opportunity to choose their foods with a grocery method.

With every client having unique preferences and needs, McDonald says that clients prefer this method and it leads to less food waste.

A majority of the food that the food bank gives to clients is from Kawartha Lakes Food Source. The Food Source has eight member food banks across Kawartha Lakes.

When clients access the food bank's services, volunteers keep track of who is taking the food. These numbers help indicate how much supply the food bank will be sent each month.

For the items that the food bank does not receive from Food Source, the volunteers need to find by searching through flyers for the best deals, or receive as donations by the community.

"It has slowly increased," said Butts, noting that their clients fluctuate throughout the year.

Butts says that anything that you might enjoy on your grocery bill, would be greatly appreciated at the food bank.

One of the quickest things to fly off their shelves is ketchup. Other rarely seen items are things like taco making kits and boxes of cookies. Things that are quick to be cut from a grocery list.

While desirable, all non-perishable food and fresh produce is accepted and greatly appreciated.

Everyone deserves a tasty treat now and then. Especially approaching the Christmas season, you can consider donating a box of cookies. When at your lowest, there is nothing better at bringing your spirits up than a sweet little treat.

"It is busier in the winter than the summertime," said Butts.

Butts says that this is likely due to clients getting seasonal work and growing their own food in their gardens.

Adequate transportation is a giant hurdle for people that are already struggling financially.

"One of the big things is proximity," said Butts. "It helps them tide themselves over before they can make the big trip to a larger community to shop."

Over the years, Butts and McDonald say that there is nothing more rewarding than seeing clients not require their services.

It would be Butts' dream that in five years, no one would need to visit a food bank. She envisions a program for people who need access to food to have a stipend that they can use at grocery stores.

For those local and in need, they are open two Thursdays each month. For 2025, the remaining dates to access the Kinmount and District Food Bank are Nov. 20 and Dec. 4 and 18. Their hours of operation are from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Monetary donations are the best way to support the work done at the Kinmount and District Food Bank.

In the town of Kinmount there are donation collection boxes located in J. Austin and Sons Castle Building Centre, the Kawartha Credit Union, and the Post Office. Donations can be directly submitted to the food bank online through CanadaHelps.com.

A volunteer will happily accept any monetary donations in-person at the food bank as well.

The Kinmount and Area Food Bank is always looking for more hands. If you are interested in volunteering, they ask that you visit them in person and talk with them.

This year, the Kinmount and District Food Bank celebrated its sixth anniversary. For as long as there is a need in the community, the volunteers will be there for you at the Kinmount and District Food Bank.

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